

Editor's note: Photos of the work in progress are linked at the end of this news release.



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Gov. Beshear, Secretary Gray Provide Update on Work to Repair, Reopen  
Brent Spence Bridge**

*Bridge across Ohio River heavily damaged Wednesday in commercial truck crash, fire*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 12, 2020)** – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear and Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) Secretary Jim Gray provided a public update on the progress of an emergency project to repair and reopen the fire-damaged Brent Spence Bridge between Covington and Cincinnati, Ohio.

The bridge, which carries Interstate Highways 71 and 75 across the Ohio River, was closed to traffic in the wake of a crash early Wednesday morning involving two commercial motor vehicles that sparked an intense fire. Crews worked through the night, Wednesday into Thursday, to clear the bridge of debris and allow access to a corps of about 20 inspectors and engineers.

“Everyone recognizes the importance of the Brent Spence Bridge and the entire I-71 and I-75 corridor. We are committed – fully committed – to reopening this bridge as quickly as we can, provided it is fully safe for everyone that would cross it,” the Governor said. “I want to emphasize our need for patience and also planning for your personal and business disruption that’s going to be occurring for at least the next several weeks. We need a little patience as well until we can give you an official timeline.”

Secretary Gray spent Thursday at the bridge and offered this assessment of damage and the challenge ahead.

“We are taking vigorous steps with the most talented engineers in order to assess the damage and get the bridge reopened to traffic,” Secretary Gray said. “But we know under fully the best case, we have repairs that will take weeks to execute. So, it is important that our businesses, our commercial traffic and residents prepare for this.”

Gov. Beshear and Secretary Gray gave the following updates, as of 2:30 p.m. EST:

- The recovery project is moving on multiple tracks at once: While inspectors examine the damage and collect samples for materials testing, engineers are designing specific repairs in real time.
- While inspections are underway, KYTC is securing the vendors, supplies and contractors that will be needed regardless of the design specifics of the repair project.
- The Ohio River, which the U.S. Coast Guard closed to commercial and recreational boat traffic for safety reasons, has been reopened.
- KYTC is working with officials on both the Ohio and Kentucky sides of the river to reopen the historic Roebling Bridge, upriver from the Brent Spence, to passenger traffic. Covington police closed the bridge to motor vehicles Wednesday night after large commercial trucks were seen going onto the bridge in defiance of its 11-ton weight limit and posted warning signs. The pedestrian walkway is open to foot traffic.

Photos of work being performed today on the bridge can be found [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Further updates can be found at the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s webpage, [here](#).

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*For official news and updates from the Beshear/Coleman administration, visit [governor.ky.gov/news](http://governor.ky.gov/news).*